

Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Subcommittees on Energy and Power and Commerce, Manufacturing, and Trade
Hearing on “EPA’s Proposed Ozone Rule: Potential Impacts on Manufacturing”
June 16, 2015

(As Prepared for Delivery)

Today we continue our work examining EPA’s proposed new National Ambient Air Quality Standard for ground-level ozone, and in particular its impact on jobs and the manufacturers who will bear much of the compliance burden.

At the beginning of his second term, President Obama set a goal of creating one million new manufacturing jobs. Unfortunately, President Obama’s rhetoric has failed to match up with the economic realities of the policies coming out of the EPA. The new rules have been wide ranging, and each one on their own, like the Clean Power Plan, will harm our economy. Taken collectively, the results could be disastrous.

This proposed rule is a tough pill for the manufacturing industry to swallow. An ozone nonattainment designation would make it significantly more difficult for industries to invest and create businesses in communities across the United States. Even existing factories would face higher operating costs and red tape. EPA estimates that hundreds of counties across the country would not meet the proposed standards, including many in Michigan. In southwest Michigan, in Allegan County, you could remove all of the human activity and the region would still be in non-attainment because of ozone generated in Chicago, Milwaukee, and Gary, Indiana.

The economic consequences of this proposed rule are very real. I recently received a letter from Southwest Michigan First, an economic development organization in Kalamazoo, Michigan. The CEO Ron Kitchens wrote to me yesterday voicing their concerns with the EPA’s proposal.

In the letter, Ron wrote, “The addition of red tape and more severe requirements in these non-attainment areas would stifle economic development and job growth including much needed highway funding in our region and state.”

Any proposal must take into account economic growth and job creation – and the ozone revisions do not. I strongly support efforts to reduce smog and I supported the ozone standard finalized in 2008. We have seen significant progress and I endorse reasonable measures to ensure that air quality continues to improve. I believe that we don’t need a new ozone standard - we need EPA to implement the existing one.

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